



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release MONDAY, APRIL 28, 1941.

LOUISIANA'S OFFICIALS WELCOME FEDERAL AID WILDLIFE PROJECTS

With the recent participation of Louisiana in the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration program inaugurated in 1938, all except three States are now conducting wildlife conservation projects with the aid of Federal funds, Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes announced today. Florida, Georgia, and Nevada are the only States that have not passed the necessary assenting legislation permitting them to participate in the program.

An investigation of fur resources management initiated the program in Louisiana.

The Federal Aid Act is administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service. Since the act has been in effect, more than 400 projects in 45 States have been approved, Service officials said.

Louisiana has been allotted \$32,688 as its share of the funds appropriated by Congress for Federal Aid projects for the fiscal year 1941. Under the Federal Aid Act, also called the Pittman-Robertson Act, each State is apportioned a certain sum each year, the apportionment being based on the total acreage and the number of licensed hunters in the State. The Federal

Government pays 75 percent of the cost of each project and the State 25 percent.

Study Muskrats First

"The fur resources investigation which starts the program," said J. A. Partridge, executive assistant to the Louisiana Commissioner of Conservation, "will be of vast importance to the State because it affects one of our leading industries."

Last year Louisiana Trappers took more than 2,000,000 muskrats, it was estimated in a Fish and Wildlife Service survey of the fur take in the United States.

"With this muskrat study we hope to be able to improve the manner of trapping," continued Mr. Partridge, "and thus we hope both to increase the trappers' returns and at the same time conserve a valuable natural resource."

Knowledge obtained in the Federal Aid study will also enable them to distribute the fur animals properly, the State official added.

Turkey, Quail Projects May be Next

Supervising the new Federal Aid work for the Louisiana Department of Conservation is Major James Brown, who resigned as Director of the Game and Fish Division of the Kentucky Department of Conservation to accept his new post in Louisiana. Major Brown had headed the Kentucky division for 4-1/2 years. Before that he had been Commissioner of Game and Fish in Vermont for 5 years.

"The first Federal Aid project in Louisiana will be made to determine the best practices that will lead to profitable and practical fur animal management," declared Major Brown. "When investigations show which areas have been depleted of muskrats for one cause or another, we'll try to correct those factors and reintroduce muskrats if necessary where it is practicable to do so."

Major Brown indicated that quail and turkeys would probably receive early attention from his investigators.

Several veteran muskrat trappers in the marshes of southern Louisiana concurred with the Louisiana State officials by expressing approval of the Federal Aid projects. They recalled that formerly good muskrat marshes no longer produced large numbers of the valuable fur animals. One large marsh area trapped by a private concern, however, has been managed scientifically for a number of years. The example set by that company convinced many trappers that a properly managed area can continue producing an annual crop of muskrats year after year.

Declaring that they have the best muskrat marshes in the country, the Louisiana officials expect that their Federal Aid investigations will eventually lead to the trapping of larger numbers of muskrats each year, thus maintaining the State in the ranks of the world's leading fur producers.

- C -